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Birds of Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge

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Cedar Island National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1964, is located in Carteret County, North Carolina, on the end of a peninsula marking the southern end of Pamlico Sound. The refuge lies about 5 miles northeast of Atlantic and about 40 miles northeast of Beaufort, North Carolina. It serves as an important resting and feeding area for migrant and wintering waterfowl in the chain of waterfowl refuges along the Atlantic Flyway from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.

The refuge consists of approximately 12,526 acres including 10,000 acres of irregularly flooded salt marsh and 2,041 acres of woodlands. The salt marsh vegetation is dominated by black needlerush, saltgrass, and saltmeadow cordgrass. The woodland vegetation is comprised of longleaf and pond pine, as well as shrubs which include wax-myrtle, gallberry, red bay, yaupon, and fetterbush.

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Over 270 species of birds can be observed each year on the refuge. When waterfowl reach their peak numbers during December and January, about 10,000 redheads, 6,000 lesser scaup, and 400 black ducks, as well as smaller numbers of other waterfowl can be observed on the Cedar Island Refuge. The refuge is the northernmost limit of the range of the endangered brown pelican and they can occasionally be observed. The secretive black rail is a permanent resident of the salt marsh and can be heard calling on calm spring nights. Other permanent residents of note include the green heron, little blue heron, cattle egret, clapper and Virginia rails, marsh hawk, laughing gull, belted kingfisher, and long-billed marsh wren. Many shorebirds and warblers pass through the refuge on their spring and fall migrations.

The refuge staff would appreciate hearing about any rare or unusual sightings that you may experience.

Cedar Island Refuge is administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Enjoy your visit!

Birds nesting locally are preceded by a *. Symbols indicative of seasonal abundance of each species are used as follows:

Sp - March - May
S - June - August
F - September - November
W - December - February

a - abundant - common species that is very numerous.
c - common - certain to be seen in suitable habitat.
u - uncommon - present but not certain to be seen.
o - occasional - seen only a few times during season.
r - rare - seen at intervals of 2 - 5 years.

	Sp	S	F	W
Loons, Pelicans, Herons and Egrets, Bitterns, Swans, Geese and Ducks				
—Common Loon	c	u	c	c
—Red-throated Loon	.			r
—Horned Grebe				u
—Red-necked Grebe				r
—Pied-billed Grebe	u		c	c
—Audubon's Shearwater		r		
—Sooty Shearwater		r		
—Wilson's Petrel		r		
—White Pelican		r		
—*Brown Pelican	o	o	o	o
—Gannet			o	u
—Double-crested Cormorant	o	u	o	o
—*Great Blue Heron	c	c	c	c
—*Green Heron	c	c	c	r
—*Little Blue Heron	c	c	c	r
—*Cattle Egret	c	c	c	c
—*Common Egret	c	c	c	c
—*Snowy Egret	o	u	u	o
—*Louisiana Heron		u	u	
—*Black-crowned Night Heron	u	u	u	u
—Yellow-crowned Night Heron		r		
—American Bittern	c	u	c	c
—*Least Bittern	c	c	c	
—Wood Stork		o		
—Glossy Ibis	o	o		
—White Ibis		r		
—Whistling Swan	o		c	a
—Canada Goose	u		c	a
—Brant	o		u	c
—Snow Goose			o	u
—Mallard	u	u	c	a
—*Black Duck	c	u	c	a
—Gadwall	u	r	c	c
—Pintail	c		a	a
—Green-winged Teal	c		a	a
—Blue-winged Teal	c		c	c
—European Wigeon			r	
—*American Wigeon	u		c	c
—Northern Shoveler	o		o	u
—*Wood Duck	u	u	c	c
—Redhead	u		c	a
—Ring-necked Duck	o		o	u
—Canvasback	c		c	a
—Greater Scaup				c
—Lesser Scaup	c		c	a
—Common Goldeneye	u		u	c
—Bufflehead	u		u	c
—Oldsquaw				u
—White-winged Scoter				r

	Sp	S	F	W
Surf Scoter			r	u
Common Scoter			r	u
Ruddy Duck			u	c
Hooded Merganser	u		u	c
Common Merganser	u		u	c
Red-breasted Merganser	c	r	u	a

Vultures and Hawks, Rails and Gallinules, Plover and Sandpipers, Woodcock, Snipe

*Turkey Vulture	c	c	c	c
*Black Vulture	u	u	u	u
*Sharp-shinned Hawk	c		c	c
*Cooper's Hawk	o	o	o	o
*Red-tailed Hawk	u	u	u	c
*Red-shouldered Hawk	u	u	u	u
Broad-winged Hawk			o	
Rough-legged Hawk				r
Golden Eagle			r	r
Bald Eagle	r	r	r	r
*Marsh Hawk or Harrier	c	c	c	c
*Osprey	c	c	u	r
Peregrine Falcon				r
Pigeon Hawk or Merlin				u
*Sparrow Hawk or Kestrel	c	u	u	c
*Bobwhite	u	u	u	u
*King Rail	o	u	u	o
*Clapper Rail	c	c	c	c
*Virginia Rail	u	u	c	c
Sora		u	u	u
Yellow Rail				o
*Black Rail	c	c	c	c
Purple Gallinule		u	u	
*Common Gallinule	u	u	u	u
American Coot	c	o	c	a
*American Oystercatcher	c	c	c	c
Semipalmated Plover	u	o	u	
Piping Plover	u	o	u	
Wilson's Plover	u	o	u	
American Golden Plover	r		r	
Black-bellied Plover	u	o	u	u
*Killdeer	u	u	u	c
Ruddy Turnstone	r		r	
*American Woodcock	o	o	u	c
Common Snipe			u	c
Whimbrel	o		o	
Upland Plover	r		r	
Spotted Sandpiper	c		c	
Solitary Sandpiper	c		c	
*Willet	c	c	c	
Greater Yellowlegs	c	c	c	o
Lesser Yellowlegs	c	c	c	o

	Sp	S	F	W
Knot	o	r	o	
Purple Sandpiper				r
Pectoral Sandpiper	r		r	
White-rumped Sandpiper	r		r	
Least Sandpiper	u		u	
Stilt Sandpiper	r		r	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	u	u	u	
Western Sandpiper	r		r	
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	r		r	

Dowitcher and Phalaropes, Gulls and Terns, Doves and Cuckoos, Owls, Goatsuckers, Woodpeckers

Dunlin				o
Short-billed Dowitcher	o		o	o
Long-billed Dowitcher	r		r	
Marbled Godwit	r		r	
Sanderling	u	u	u	u
American Avocet			r	
Red Phalarope	r		r	
Northern Phalarope	r		r	
Great Black-backed Gull			u	c
Herring Gull	u	o	u	c
Ring-billed Gull	u	u	u	c
*Laughing Gull	c	a	c	r
Bonaparte's Gull				o
*Gull-billed Tern	r	o		
Forster's Tern	o	o	r	
*Common Tern	o	c		
*Least Tern	u	c	u	
*Royal Tern	u	c	u	
Sandwich Tern		r		
*Caspian Tern	o	o	o	
Black Tern		u	o	
*Black Skimmer	c	c	c	
Dovekie				r
*Mourning Dove	c	c	c	c
*Ground Dove	r	r	r	r
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	u	c		
Black-billed Cuckoo	r		r	
*Barn Owl	u	u	u	c
*Screech Owl	c	c	c	c
*Great Horned Owl	c	c	c	c
*Barred Owl	c	c	c	c
Short-eared Owl				r
*Chuck-will's Widow	c	c	c	
*Whip-poor-will	u	u	u	
*Common Nighthawk	u	c	u	
*Chimney Swift	c	c	c	
*Ruby-throated Hummingbird	c	c	c	
*Belted Kingfisher	c	c	c	c

	Sp	S	F	W
*Common Flicker	c	u	c	c
*Pileated Woodpecker	o	o	o	o
*Red-bellied Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
*Red-headed Woodpecker	c	c	c	c
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				c
*Hairy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
*Downy Woodpecker	u	u	u	c

Flycatchers, Swallows, Nuthatches, Crows, Wrens, Thrushes, Kinglets, Starling and Shrike

*Eastern Kingbird	c	c	u	
*Great Crested Flycatcher	c	c		
*Eastern Phoebe	u	r	u	c
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			r	
*Acadian Flycatcher	u	c	u	
Traill's Flycatcher	r		r	
*Eastern Wood Pewee	u	c	u	
Horned Lark				r
Tree Swallow	u		u	c
Bank Swallow	r		r	
Rough-winged Swallow		c		
Barn Swallow	r	u	r	
Cliff Swallow	r		r	
*Purple Martin	c	a		
Blue Jay	r	r	r	r
*Common Crow	a	a	a	a
*Fish Crow	c	c	c	c
*Carolina Chickadee	u	u	c	c
*Tufted Titmouse	u	u	u	u
White-breasted Nuthatch				u
Red-breasted Nuthatch			r	r
*Brown-headed Nuthatch	c	c	c	c
Brown Creeper				o
House Wren	u	u	u	o
Winter Wren				o
*Carolina Wren	u	u	c	c
*Long-billed Marsh Wren	a	a	a	a
Short-billed Marsh Wren				o
*Mockingbird	c	c	c	c
*Catbird	c	c	c	u
*Brown Thrasher	u	c	u	o
American Robin	u		c	a
*Wood Thrush	u	u	u	
Hermit Thrush	u		u	c
Swainson's Thrush	o		o	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	r		r	
Veery	u		u	
Eastern Bluebird				o
*Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	o	o	o	r
Golden-crowned Kinglet				u
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	u		u	c

	Sp	S	F	W
Water Pipit				u
Cedar Waxwing				c
Loggerhead Shrike				o
*Starling	c	c	c	c

Vireos, Warblers, Blackbirds and Grackles, Cardinal, Cowbird

*White-eyed Vireo	c	c	c	
Yellow-throated Vireo	r			
Solitary Vireo			o	u
*Red-eyed Vireo	c	c	c	
Philadelphia Vireo	r		r	
Black-and-white Warbler			u	r
*Prothonotary Warbler	c	c		
Swainson's Warbler	r			
Worm-eating Warbler	r			
Tennessee Warbler			r	
Orange-crowned Warbler			o	r
Nashville Warbler	r		r	
*Northern Parula	c	c	c	
Yellow Warbler	o	o		
Magnolia Warbler	r		r	
Cape May Warbler	r		r	
Black-throated Blue Warbler	o		o	
Myrtle Warbler	a		u	a
Black-throated Gray Warbler	r		r	
Black-throated Green Warbler	o		o	
Cerulean Warbler			r	
*Yellow-throated Warbler	c	c	u	
Blackpoll Warbler	o		o	
*Pine Warbler	u	u	u	u
*Prairie Warbler	c	c		
Palm Warbler			o	r
Ovenbird	r		r	
Northern Waterthrush	o		o	
Louisiana Waterthrush		o		
*Yellowthroat	c	c	c	c
*Yellow-breasted Chat	o		o	r
Mourning Warbler			r	
Kentucky Warbler		o		
Connecticut Warbler	r		r	
*Hooded Warbler	u	u		
Canada Warbler	r		r	
American Redstart	u		u	
*House Sparrow	c	c	c	c
Bobolink	c		c	
*Eastern Meadowlark	c	c	c	c
*Red-winged Blackbird	a	a	a	a
Rusty Blackbird				o
Brewer's Blackbird				r
Orchard Oriole	u	u		

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	Sp	S	F	W
—*Common Grackle	c	c	c	a
—*Boat-tailed Grackle	c	c	c	c
—*Brown-headed Cowbird	c	u	c	c
— Summer Tanager		o		
—*Cardinal	c	c	c	c
Grosbeaks, Buntings and Juncos, Finch and Siskin, Sparrows				
— Rose-breasted Grosbeak	r		r	
— Evening Grosbeak				r
— Blue Grosbeak		o		
—*Indigo Bunting	o	u	o	
—*Painted Bunting	u	c	u	
— Dickcissel		r		
— Purple Finch				u
— Pine Siskin				o
— American Goldfinch				u
—*Rufous-sided Towhee	c	c	c	c
— Savannah Sparrow	u		u	c
— Grasshopper Sparrow				o
— Henslow's Sparrow				r
— Sharp-tailed Sparrow				c
—*Seaside Sparrow	c	u	c	c
— Vesper Sparrow				u
—*Bachman's Sparrow	r	o	r	
— Dark-eyed Junco			r	u
— Chipping Sparrow		o		
—*Field Sparrow	c	c	c	c
— White-crowned Sparrow			u	u
— White-throated Sparrow	u		u	c
— Fox Sparrow				o
— Swamp Sparrow	u		u	c
— Song Sparrow	u		u	c
— Snow Bunting				r

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U. S. administration.

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